

Awesome Responsibility

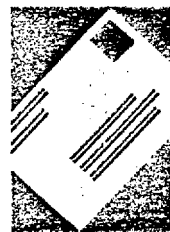
CIA 5.03.2
CIA 6.04 Paisley,
John

I have just seen your editorial of Oct. 13, "CIA's Unrelenting Arrogance."

Providing your readers with editorial judgments which they trust and believe is an awesome responsibility. To provide such judgments based on false information without any attempt to verify your facts is faulty journalism at best. To provide such judgments based on ignorance of the facts is frightening. In your Oct. 13 editorial you have accomplished both.

Based on a story in the Wilmington Journal — like the Free Press a Gannett newspaper — you report that five CIA officials have put pressure on the Maryland State Police to drop the investigation into the death of a former CIA employee and consultant. A call to my office or to the Maryland State Police would have provided you with the information that the charge made by the Wilmington Journal was utterly irresponsible and ridiculous. If you did not believe my answer you could have had the decency to call me a liar in print.

In closing your editorial you demand the President and the Congress to hold the CIA accountable for its deeds and to impose severe restrictions to assure the American



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people and others that it (the CIA) will not overstep its bounds again.

Where have you been?

In January of this year President Carter signed Executive Order 12036, "United States Intelligence Activities" which spells out in great detail what the CIA can and cannot do. Some 18 months ago the President created the Intelligence Oversight Board (IOB) whose only mission is to look over and into the activities of this country's intelligence apparatus. Both Houses of Congress have created committees for precisely the same purpose — the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence (May 19, 1976) and the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (July 24, 1977). Both committees are now working on Charter Legislation to provide laws to direct and limit our intelligence activities.

Should The Burlington Free Press, Wilmington Journal or anyone else have evidence, information or suspicion of any wrongdoing or impropriety by the CIA in the case of the investigation being undertaken by the Maryland State Police — or in any other activity involving the CIA — I urge you to make your information known to the IOB and to the two intelligence committees in the Congress. I can assure you that your charges will be fully investigated.

I also urge you in fairness to your readers to have the courage to print this response. Those in the CIA who work for the citizens of the United States in a thankless and often dangerous profession are deeply hurt by your groundless charges. It is you who have an unrelenting arrogance.

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Washington, D.C.